

A JOINT MEMORIAL

S
J
M

1
5
P
a
g
e

1

1
2 REQUESTING THE CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES DEPARTMENT AND THE
3 HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT TO CONVENE A TASK FORCE TO CREATE AN
4 INTERDEPARTMENTAL PLAN TO ADDRESS THE NEEDS OF CHILDREN OF
5 INCARCERATED PARENTS AND THEIR CAREGIVERS.

6 WHEREAS, annually, at least five thousand New Mexico children have a parent
7 or parents in prison; and

8 WHEREAS, these children are six to eight times more likely to be incarcerated
9 themselves later in their lives; and

10 WHEREAS, the state has no system for recognizing and addressing the needs
11 of children whose parents are incarcerated and whose plight is essentially invisible;
12 and

13 WHEREAS, the majority of families caring for these children are living below
14 the federal poverty level; and

15 WHEREAS, many of these children experience serious behavioral problems,
16 but these problems are seldom identified and the children rarely receive necessary
17 services; and

18 WHEREAS, often these children and families qualify for benefits, but receive
19 them only on occasion; and

20 WHEREAS, being the child of an incarcerated parent is not a crime, but these
21 children are often left in a state of neglect;

22 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE
23 STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the children, youth and families department and the
24 human services department be requested to convene a task force to create an
25 interdepartmental plan to address the needs of children of incarcerated parents and
their caregivers; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force include representatives from
the department of health, the state department of public education, the corrections
department, the state agency on aging, the public defender department,

1 representatives from a statewide association of district court judges, detention center
2 affiliates of a statewide association of counties, state and local law enforcement
3 agencies, a statewide association of district attorneys, caregivers and advocates for
4 children and families; and

5 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force develop a system for
6 identifying and inventorying needs and services and the barriers to accessing those
7 services; and

8 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force develop a coordinated system
9 of evaluation and intake for all children of incarcerated parents; and

10 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force develop an integrated plan of
11 service delivery, budgeting, performance measures and accountability; and

12 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force report progress and
13 legislative recommendations to the interim legislative health and human services
14 committee at its October 2003 meeting; and

15 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this memorial be transmitted to the
16 children, youth and families department, the human services department, the
17 department of health, the state department of public education, the corrections
18 department, the state agency on aging, the public defender department,
19 representatives from a statewide association of district court judges, detention center
20 affiliates of a statewide association of counties, state and local law enforcement
21 agencies, a statewide association of district attorneys, caregivers, advocates for
22 children and families, the legislative health and human services committee and other
23 appropriate groups.
24
25